GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3875
ANSWERED ON:09.08.2016
Protected Species
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the number and names of protected species of animals, birds and plants under the Wild Life Protection Act, 1972;
(b) the steps taken by the Government to protect all the said species;
(c) whether it is a fact that several species of turtle and snake have been seized from different parts of the country and if so, the details thereof; and
(d) the estimated value of the seized species and the action taken against the offenders?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a) There are 909 entries of taxa (including species, genus, families, orders and classes) of animals, birds and plants in the various Schedules of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. The names of protected species of animals, birds and plants in the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 mentioned at Schedule 1 of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 is available on the Ministry's website –www.moef.nic.in.
(b) Towards the protection of those species, the Govt. of India has established a country-wide protected area network (730 Protected Areas including 103 National Parks, 535 Wildlife Sanctuaries, 26 Community Reserves, and 66 Conservation Reserves in different bio-geographic regions), under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to conserve wild animals and their habitats of threatened flora and fauna. Other steps taken by the Government to ensure protection of these species are as under:
i. Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

ii. Special programmes like 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' have been launched for conservation of these endangered species and their habitats.

iii. A specific component of "Recovery programmes for saving critically endangered species and habitats' is provided in the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats' for focused conservation action on selected critically endangered species.

iv. Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/ Union Territory (UT) Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes for providing better protection to wildlife including endangered species and improvement of its habitat.

v. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

vi. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has been set up to ensure co-ordination among various officers and State Governments in connection with the enforcement of law for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products. In this endeavour WCCB has undertaken a number of steps like Intelligence led enforcement, sensitization on smuggling wildlife articles to Border Guarding forces and Customs, Interagency coordination of enforcement, inclusion of wildlife smuggling in bilateral and multilateral discussion and spreading awareness and education campaigns for various stakeholders.

vii. Biological Diversity Act, 2002, was inter-alia enacted to ensure protection of threatened species and their habitats. Under the provisions of Section 38 of the National Biodiversity Act, 2002, the species which are on the verge of extinction or likely to become extinct in near future as threatened species, are notified. Ministry has already issued notifications for 16 states and 2 UTs to this effect.

viii. Botanical Survey of India has brought a number of endemic/threatened plants under cultivation in its Acharya Jagdish Chandra Bose Indian Botanic Garden in Howrah, Botanic Garden of Indian Republic, Noida and other associated botanic gardens of its regional centres for their ex-situ conservation, thereby complementing the in-situ conservation of such species in protected areas established in different bio-geographical regions of the country.

(c) to (d) Yes, Sir. Several species of turtles and snakes have been seized from different parts of the country. As per the available records of the WCCB based on the information received from the State Forest and Police departments, the year wise details of the number of cases detected on the seizure of turtle/tortoise and snake during the last three years and the current year are as under:
Year Turtle/Tortoise Snakes

2013 13 17
2014 71 19
2015 52 10
2016 (up-to 30.06.2016) 6 3

No set procedure is available to assign monetary value to the seized wildlife species in the country. Moreover assigning value to the seized contraband may instigate more poaching/illegal trade of the species. Offences detected and offenders arrested for offences against the scheduled species are dealt with as per the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 by the concerned enforcement agencies.
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